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A WORKINGMAN'S REASONS

FOR THE

RE-ELECTION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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CITY OF WASHINGTON.

The selection of a candidate for the highest office in the gift of the American people is, at all times, a matter of great importance, but no previous choice has ever involved questions of such grave moment as that which was made on the eighth of June, in the city of Baltimore. Actuated by the purest motives, and the most sacred considerations for the national welfare, the delegates to the convention of the National Union Party did then and there, nominate Abraham Lincoln for re-election to the Presidency. As a plain working man, I desire to give, especially to working men, some reasons why the choice of the convention should be ratified at the polls next November.

1. *Abraham Lincoln is in the strictest sense of the phrase a man of the people.* With a single exception, all previous occupants of the Presidential chair proved themselves worthy of the great trust committed to them by their fellow-citizens. But they were not men of the people, in the same sense as the present incumbent. By birth, fortune, education, social position, and professional pursuit, they were far removed from the great mass of their countrymen. Andrew Jackson stood in closer proximity to the body of the people than any of his predecessors, and yet, all the circumstances of his early career, as well as the inherent force of his character, conspired to make him the leader of his associates and fellow-citizens of the south western frontier, rather than their equal companion. But what have we in Abraham Lincoln? You are sufficiently familiar

with the story of his life to enable you to give a prompt answer to this question. His parents were poor, industrious, and respected for their virtues.

Their son received the rich endowment from the Creator's hand, of a great intellect and a good heart. But they were so situated that their gifted child grew to manhood with very limited opportunities for intellectual culture, and subject to poverty's ordinary condition of hard labor for daily bread. When you see him in the pictorials of the day with sleeves tucked up to his elbows, and axe in hand, or floating down some Western stream on a raft of lumber, it is no partizan fancy sketch designed to take the eye, and secure the votes of workingmen, but a simple reality of his early life. He has been placed in your circumstances. He has felt your necessities. If he has risen so far above his companions in early toil, it is because God had endowed him with that rare superiority of intellect which no combination of disadvantages can depress or obscure. And now, in this great man, sprung from the ranks of the people, ought we not to see and acknowledge the hand of a special Providence? What is that rebellion which broke out immediately upon the announcement of his election? Is it not the will of a minority set up in defiance of the will of a majority? Is it not a conspiracy of the few against the rights of the many? Is it not bloody handed treason, inaugurated by a slave-breeding, and slave-trafficking aristocracy, for the purpose of nullifying the decisions of the ballot-box, and overthrowing a Government that makes the landless workingman's vote equal to that of the richest proprietor in all the land? Yes, such is precisely the character of the existing rebellion. I repeat, therefore, may not a retributive hand of a just God be recognized in the selection of a man of the people to avenge the wrongs of the people, and to put down a rebellion that seeks the establishment of monarchy and privileged orders upon the ruin of their equal rights?

2. *Abraham Lincoln enjoys the confidence of the people.* It is common for parties to charge each other with ambitious designs to increase their power, and to enrich themselves by

the employment of corrupt and dishonorable means. This charge, it must be confessed, has not always been groundless. All men are naturally imperfect. Passion often clamors for gratification till it drowns the voice of conscience. Few, comparatively, are the souls who are made of that sterner stuff which enables them to resist the solicitations of avarice, and defy the power of every temptation. And it must not be disguised that war times are always peculiarly favorable to corruption in the various departments of the public service. You are aware that the present Administration has been fiercely assailed with charges of the grossest delinquency, and in a few instances, the charges have been sustained, not, however, against those who constitute the Administration, strictly speaking, but against certain parties engaged in the public service by their appointment. You are aware also that upon complaint being made, Congress has instituted investigations, and the guilty have been brought to punishment. The well established cases of fraud, however, have been few in number, and are such as would have occurred under any Administration possible to have been selected from among the sons of men. Considering indeed, that a great convulsion, ending in civil war, always presents opportunities to the worst men, and brings into play their worst passions, it is marvellous that so few cases of gross fraud should have happened, and is a fact that ought to redound greatly to the credit of those to whom the people have entrusted the administration of their Government. But what of the cases that have been brought home, and received the penalty of the laws? In no respect has the blame of a single one of them ever been imputed to the President. What of the arraignments and denunciations of the opposition journals, some of them so lost to all sense of duty and of shame as to plead the cause of treason in the very words of its own legitimate organs; why, not even one of these has dared to implicate the Executive in its furious charges of corruption. He has been charged with tyranny and incapacity, but never with dishonesty. What he was to his neighbors in the West, before his election, that he is now to his friends throughout the country; and what he is to his friends,

in one of the most valuable and important elements of his character, that he is also to his enemies. By universal acclaim he is "*honest old Abe.*" And let me ask whether the faith of the whole country in the honesty of its President, has not been a deep source of strength, hope, and consolation in the darkest hours? The very foundations were broken up. The times have been extraordinary. New men have appeared on the stage. Rascality has made haste to seize the auspicious moment. Treason has reared its monstrous head in the civil service, in the army, and in the navy. Great defeats have been suffered. Disaster has come swiftly upon the heels of disaster, till the patriot was ready to wring his hands in very despair of his country's deliverance. But in the midst of all this, there was one man whom the people felt would never betray them, and that man was their own President.

3. *The extraordinary and imperilled condition of the country, requires that there shall be no change of Administration for the next four years.* It is well known to you, that from the outbreak of the rebellion, one great difficulty has been to preserve peace with England and France, without sacrificing the least appearance of independence and self-respect. The first gun against Sumter was regarded by the English and French monarchists as the announcement of a jubilee. The truth as to the art of government, and the real happiness of the people of this country, had long been kept in bonds and concealment. The rebellion would open their eyes, and make plain to them their indispensable need of a hereditary crown, and a privileged aristocracy as a protection from anarchy and all its horrors. And the more certainly to insure the realization of their hopes, they were willing and even anxious to join hands with our traitors. What they most desired during the first two and a half years of our struggle, was some decent pretext for armed interference; and what our Government most desired was to deprive them of all cause for such an opportunity. Considering the undisguised solicitude of Louis Napoleon to interfere, provided England could be induced to unite with him, and the insolent attitude of the British Government, together with the

abusive and malicious tone of the British press, it required very delicate and skillful management to avoid collision with these powerful enemies. Thanks to the good sense and statesman-like tact of the President and his able Secretary, our mean spirited foes have been disappointed in their aims, and a just settlement of accounts with them has been postponed to a future day, now, thank God, near at hand. Now, a change of Administration would almost certainly lead to a change in the foreign policy of our Government, and bring us into hostile contact with our European enemies at a time that would be, to say the least, very inconvenient. Do not imagine from this plea for a present peace with foreign powers, that either Mr. Lincoln, or those who advocate his re-election, intend the abandonment of the Monroe doctrine. The American people have settled upon that doctrine as an unchangeable principle of their political creed. Abraham Lincoln is a man of the people, and enough is said when I say that his heart beats in perfect sympathy with their views and wishes. The only question is simply a question of *time*. If re-elected Mr. Lincoln will first see the head of domestic treason laid low, and then he will extend a generous and gallant hand to outraged and down-trodden Mexico. Those who, by platforms, or otherwise, clamor for instant war with France, are enemies of their own country. Their design is to insure the triumph of the Southern rebellion by adding to its forces the troops and fleets of our French and English enemies. Now, unlike these bastard sons of a tender and devoted mother, the members of the present Administration, and its friends intend to maintain a policy thoroughly American and Democratic, but their purpose is to strike when they can concentrate the whole might of their country in a single blow. Then woe betide the interloping minions of that crowned adventurer, who assumes to arrest the expansion of the Anglo-Saxon, and restore the dominion of the Latin race. But peace in our foreign relations, important as it is, does not equal the importance of another consideration that arises in the same connection. If the policy be adhered to that has been pursued for the last year and a half, the re-

bellion can be put down. Confiscation is bringing to bear a just severity upon the heads of leading rebels. Emancipation and employment of negro troops are appropriating the chief strength of the rebellion to the support of the national cause. The fleets and armies of the nation, with few individual exceptions, have become thoroughly abolitionized. Now, in view of these facts, who can estimate the confusion and disorganization, the weakness and defeat, that would inevitably follow upon a change of policy? And mark you, should the Administration be changed, there would be an immediate attempt to change the policy, so as to disband negro troops, assume the Southern debts contracted in the wholesale murder of our loyal sires and sons, return all escaped slaves to their masters, discontinue hostilities, accept the terms of the traitors, summon a national convention, and reconstruct the Union upon a Southern basis; that would make the slave-holding rebels supreme in their government, and reduce all poor whites, and the whole black race to perpetual bondage. These are the dread results to be certainly expected with a change of Administration. And what would a Union *thus* restored be worth to ourselves, or our posterity? *Could* the Union be thus restored? Certainly not, without long years of such strife and blood in every State, as has never been seen in this world.

4. *Simple justice to Mr. Lincoln demands his re-election.*— While generous and manly sympathies remain in American bosoms, his parting address, to his old neighbors and friends at Springfield, will never be forgotten. In substance he said: "I am about to assume the reins of government in the midst of difficulties that none of my predecessors have ever had to encounter. So great and numerous are the embarrassments surrounding the position to which I have been called by my fellow-citizens, that I shall constantly need the assistance of the Almighty, and the co-operation of all who love their country, and desire that its free institutions may be perpetuated for their children. *I want you to pray for me.*" All that he anticipated—more than he could anticipate—has been realized. From the day of his inauguration, to this moment, the exigen-

ces pressing upon him, have been such as never filled the thoughts of man. Extraordinary emergencies, one after another, arose in quick succession, and had to be met by extraordinary means. There were no constitutional remedies, because the authors of the constitution could not prognosticate the diseases that were to assail the vitals of the national system. There were no parallel cases in history to furnish precedents. Such a government never existed before. Such a rebellion never existed. Such questions never before occurred for arbitration and final settlement. What a position was the American presidency in the first months of eighteen hundred and sixty-one! Everything had fallen to pieces. Only the name of a Government was left. The army, the navy, and every branch of the civil service, swarmed with incumbents, whose every sympathy was in the interest of the traitors, who basely consented to eat the bread of a Government, which their heels were lifted to destroy. Chaos had come, and if the country was to be saved, there would need to be thorough reorganization in every department of the Government. Those ardent patriots, who regarded the President as too slow at the outset, are now convinced that they were mistaken, and he was right. So in regard to the great issues that have arisen in the progress of the war. Time, and the most careful consideration, were necessary to the formation of a policy that would be wisely adapted to their adjustment. And now that Mr. Lincoln's policy has been definitely framed, and is being vigorously applied, time should be given him for the execution of his own measures. Justice demands for his policy a fair trial, and that cannot be had without his re-election for a second term.

5. *Finally, the re-election of Abraham Lincoln would be the most fatal of all blows possible to be given to the hopes of the rebels.* What have we seen? Why, to the lasting disgrace and infamy of the so-called Democratic party, we have seen it asserted in the rebel press, that one of their chief grounds of hope is that that party may succeed in the next Presidential election. And, mark you, they do not hope for reconstruction of the Union, even upon their own terms, but for final separa-

tion and recognition of their independence. Now is it likely that they would venture to make and repeat such assertions if they had not some secret understanding with the leaders of the apostate democracy. Have not Messrs. Long and Harris recently avowed on the floor of Congress, that they would prefer the triumph of the rebels to their subjugation by the national arms? And when a resolution for their expulsion for this open treason was offered, the so-called democratic members voted in a solid unit against it. The whole question to be determined by the ensuing presidential election is, the restoration of the Union, or the recognition of Southern independence. Should Abraham Lincoln be re-elected, by the blessing of God, the Union will be restored, and placed on a sounder basis than ever, within the next four years. The rebels themselves would regard this re-election as the signal of their doom. But should the copperhead candidate triumph, it would be hailed by the traitors as a certain sign of deliverance. Will you then, as honest workingmen, after all that you have suffered, and your country has suffered, destroy the Union by placing the Administration of the Government in the hands of men who are in secret league with the Southern traitors? You have sent your sons to the field. Some of them have fallen. Others have returned to you maimed for life by the traitor's steel. And still others are to-day confronting treason's embattled hosts. The blood of the fallen, and the patriotic devotion of your living heroes, alike appeals to you to sustain the Union candidate against the armed rebels of the South, and their craven sympathizers of the North.

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